

They Go Where You Go:

New Post Exchange Offers Bigger, Better Shopping to Soldiers

By Pfc. Al Barrus

122nd MPAD

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service will open the doors to their new 30,000-square-foot Post Exchange (PX) April 23 in the Division Life Support Area of Camp Victory North.

According to David Schloss, the AAFES general manager for the Baghdad area, plans are underway to develop a diverse food court. Right now, Burger King is the only confirmed food concession for the PX, but other restaurant

chains are awaiting approval.

"We have come a long way since last year, where we would just open boxes of Gatorade on the floor and have a cashier a tiny little room," he added.

The store at the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) that closes April 30 has 7,000 square feet of selling space. The new PX is more than four times that size. The building's dimensions also include storage areas and offices, according to Jonathan Tokar, the general manager for all AAFES operations in Iraq.



The new 30,000-square-foot Camp Victory North Post Exchange opens April 23 and will feature two separate areas, as well as concessions. The back area will house bulk items such as furniture.



Photos by Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Army and Air Force Exchange Service visual information specialists Karen Clayton and Don Lute set blue trim around the empty shelves in the main area of the new 30,000-square-foot PX scheduled to open at Camp Victory North April 23.

Other concessions that tend to be around a PX won't be encased within the 30,000 square-foot of the building, AAFES officials noted. Concession shops such as barber, beauty, sewing and alterations, food concessions, and gift shops will be outside the structure.

An array of local vendors will also be found outside the new PX. The current plan is for all the vendors at BIAP to move to North Victory, Schloss said.

The staff of the BIAP PX, as well as the stock, will move operations to the Victory North

exchange, but more stock will be moved in and more staff will be hired to accommodate the larger PX. Though the BIAP store doesn't close until April 30, the process of stocking the North Victory PX has already begun and will open a week prior to the BIAP store closing.

"This store's stock will have total access to our European stock because this is a sustained area versus a contingency," Tokar said.

Bulkier items, such as furniture, will be in a different part of the store, separated from the smaller, more commonly seen

"We have a come a long way since last year."

**-David Schloss
AAFES General
Manager**

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New Exchange Supports Troops

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inventory items like food, hygiene products and compact discs. The store is made of two large tent-like structures that resemble BIAP's Bob Hope Dining Facility.

"We are really looking forward to opening this store," Schloss said. "We are putting in the look that you would find at your PX back in the States. We're just trying to make it as much like home as possible, and we have literally hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of merchandise on the way."

"I just want to say that our main goal for coming out here is to support our troops," Tokar said, echoing the AAFES corporate slogan of "We Go Where You Go."

"We're really happy to serve along side you," he added. "You guys carry rifles, and we carry soap."

Pilot's Dad Supportive of Iraqi War Efforts

► From the Associated Press

HOUSTON — Kenneth Fortenberry and family know the loneliness his son Chuck endured when he was shipped to Iraq about two months ago for what turned out to be his last mission.

"Our family, me and my three boys together, have 58 years in the military," Kenneth Fortenberry said Monday. "We've all done our turn, we've all had to go through what Chuck went through when he left on that plane. Think of a man with three children and a wife who doesn't know whether he's coming back. No one knows loneliness like that."

Kenneth Fortenberry said his son, Wesley Charles Fortenberry, died Sunday with another AH-64 Apache helicopter crewman when insurgents west of Baghdad shot down their aircraft, which was protecting a fuel convoy headed toward the violence-racked city of Fallujah.

Chuck Fortenberry, a

19½-year Army veteran, would have turned 39 on Thursday. The Pentagon notified the family of Fortenberry's death Sunday morning but as of Monday morning had not made public his identity, which was reported by television station KFDM in Beaumont.

Fortenberry, stationed at Fort Hood, is survived by a wife and two sons, ages 8 and

gotten real messy the last two or three days," Fortenberry said, adding that he learned about his son's final mission via e-mail. "He was fending (attackers) off and they either got him with a (rocket-propelled grenade) or a ground-to-air missile, and the (Apache) hit the ground and exploded."

Fortenberry had a variety of duties throughout his career, his father said.

Kenneth Fortenberry, who said he continues to support the Iraq war effort and believes anti-war advocates are undermining the troops, said another Apache circled the crash site to prevent Iraqis from desecrating the crewmen's remains.

"I've been told if it hadn't been for (Chuck Fortenberry and his crewmate), there would have been a lot more Americans killed," Kenneth Fortenberry said.

Funeral services are pending.



10, who live near Fort Hood. Another son, 15, lives in North Carolina.

Kenneth Fortenberry, speaking by telephone from his home in Woodville, 90 miles northeast of Houston, said his son sounded concerned when they spoke for the final time last week.

"He told me he was only flying at night but things had

SAFETY TIP:

- At the first sign of attack assume the prone position and remain in that position until the "all clear" is announced.
- If in a tent, drop to the floor, don your IBA and Kevlar, roll toward the sandbag protected wall and assume the prone position.

Wednesday

High: 91
Low: 67



Thursday

High: 95
Low: 65



Friday

High: 84
Low: 58



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Freedom Quilts Founder Visits Fort Hood Quilt-a-thon

► From Fort Hood Sentinel

FORT HOOD, Texas- In the 1989 movie "Field of Dreams," Shoeless Joe Jackson asks main character Ray Kinsella if the baseball diamond he has stepped onto is heaven and Kinsella replies "no, it's Iowa."

True, Iowa isn't heaven, but that doesn't mean angels don't occasionally emerge from the corn fields.

Betty Nielson is as close to an angel as a person can get, according to the thousands of families who have been touched by her work with Freedom Quilts. A resident of Fonda, Iowa, population 90, Nielson has dedicated her life to comforting the families of the victims of the September 11 attacks and the Soldiers killed in the war on terrorism by providing them with a physical representation of a nation's love, a handmade quilt.

"I want to say that all the love that went into making this quilt, I felt," Denise De Angelis, who lost her husband Robert in the collapse of New York's World Trade Center and received one of

Nielson's Freedom Quilts in the fall of 2002, wrote in a letter. "This quilt has been an instrument of healing for my deeply broken heart."

Nielson, who has helped distribute more than 4,800 quilts since she started the Freedom Quilt project two-and-a-half years ago, visited

Fort Hood March 25 - 26 to join 39 Texas quilters in a quilt-a-thon to benefit the Freedom Quilt project and Operation Quilted Comfort.

"For many families, to receive one of these quilts is like [having] loving arms wrapped around them," Nielson said. "It is my life's work to comfort these families."

Welcoming quilters from as far away as Fort Worth, the two-day event produced 18 quilts, all of which will be distributed to families of Soldiers killed since September 11.

"We wanted to make as many quilts as possible but we hope we won't need to use any," quilt-a-thon co-organizer Valerie Taber said.

Lorraine Karl, a resident of Plano, Texas who made the two hour trip to Fort Hood after reading about the quilt-a-thon online, donated enough panels to finish three quilts.

"I don't have the freedom of the Internet, of the press, the ability to go anywhere I want, without military to back that freedom up," Karl said. "We can't begin to repay the families these quilts will be going to for their sacrifice."

Ken and Pat Polhemus came down from Fort Worth to help with the quilt-a-thon after seeing an article in a Dallas paper. Ken, a Vietnam Veteran and Marine helicopter pilot, said they came to support the families of Fort



Betty Nielson, founder of Freedom Quilts, with her husband Dennis, put the finishing touches on a quilt during a Quilt-a-thon at Fort Hood.

Hood Soldiers.

"We had nothing when I went overseas and, in those days, they would tell Pat that her husband was a baby killer," Ken said. "We just want to support these families."

A former technician for the Air Force, Nielson is no stranger to military life and said she feels like all the Soldiers and their loved ones are a part of her family.

"Do we enjoy freedom of religion, freedom of the press ... the right to vote?" Nielson asked. "If we enjoy all these freedoms, then we have our military men and women to thank."

During a ceremony March 26, Nielson presented three Fort Hood widows with quilts to honor their fallen Soldiers. Linnie Blankenbecker and her

daughter Jessica were on hand to accept a quilt in honor of Command Sgt. Maj. James Blankenbecker, 1st Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery, 4th Infantry Division, who was killed Oct. 1 outside of Samara, Iraq.

"Some of these quilts have tears in them but they all have a lot of prayers in them too," Nielson said.

For Nielson, and her husband Dennis, the trip from Iowa to Texas and time away from pre-planting and machinery preparations is just a small sacrifice in consideration of the sacrifices Soldiers and families are making for the nation.

"These men and women are fighting to make sure that we keep our freedom, [to ensure] that no more terrorist acts happen again and they are worth every last ounce of our energy."

Nielson is always looking for help in her continuing quest to provide a quilt to the families of every September 11 victim as well as to every family of Soldiers killed in the War on Terrorism.

Whether time, fabric or money, Nielson said that only through team work can the lovingly made quilts find their way into every family's home.

"Together, we can do it," said Nielson. "I don't want to leave a single Soldier's family behind."

For more information on the project or to request a quilt for the family of a fallen Soldier, e-mail debenniel@ncn.net or visit www.freedomquilts.net.

"It is my life's work to comfort these families"

-Betty Nielson, Freedom Quilts Founder



Associated Press

San Francisco Giant all-star outfielder Barry Bonds celebrates after hitting his 660th career home run in a 7-5 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers Monday night. This homer ties him with his hall-of-fame godfather, Willie Mays, for third place on the all-time list. Still ahead of the slugger are Babe Ruth (714) and Henry Aaron (755).

The 'Bambino' is Next

Bonds' Blast Catches Godfather

► *From the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*

SAN FRANCISCO — For the past few days, Willie Mays noted that Barry Bonds was forcing things and, in the process, becoming somewhat anxious and a bit frustrated.

"I felt that he was pressing a bit," said Mays, who studied his godson closely.

"During the few times Barry goes into a slump, I tell him to stay focused on himself, don't worry about the next guy, don't try and lift the ball. Just put a good swing on the ball. I think he did that today."

It was much more than a good swing. It was majestic, timely and historic, all in one.

When Bonds crushed a poorly placed fastball from Milwaukee's Matt Kinney far over the right-field wall of SBC Park and into the drink Monday, the San Francisco slugger's date with destiny

finally had arrived.

Bonds' 442-foot rainbow was No. 660 of his awe-inspiring career, drawing even with Mays for third place on the all-time list. Only Babe Ruth (714) and Hank Aaron (755) remain ahead.

As he watched the ball soar into an unmistakable home-run arc, Bonds threw both arms in the air, as much in relief as triumph.

"It was like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders," said Bonds, who lapsed into a 3-for-16 skid after drawing within one of Mays with a home run on opening day in Houston.

"I felt a sense of accomplishment in the game of baseball. It was a relief to stand next to my godfather and feel like I've accomplished something."

As Bonds circled the bases slowly and fireworks went off in a scene out of

"The Natural," Mays emerged from the Giants' dugout to make a much-anticipated symbolic gesture. His gift to Bonds was a replica Olympic torch Mays received for participating in a cross-country relay before the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City.

Bonds took the torch, held it high for the sellout crowd of 42,548 to see, then posed for photos with Mays.

It was one of those perfect days that few athletes get to experience. Bonds also walked, lined an RBI single up the middle and doubled when his towering pop fly fell in no-man's land in left field in the seventh inning.

"I really wish my dad could have been here to be a part of this," said Bonds, who erased a 4-2 Brewers lead with the three-run blast to lead the Giants to a 7-5 victory.

TV GUIDE

	AFN ATLANTIC	AFN PACIFIC	AFN Sports	AFN Spectrum
18:00	Popular Mechanics for Kids/Strange Days at Blake...	Tonight Show/The Late Show 18:30	NHL - Playoffs-Boston Bruins @ Montreal Canadiens	The Devil's Own 17:00
19:00	Jeopardy/Headline News	Access Hollywood 19:30	Sportscenter	The Wild Thornberrys/The Fairly Oddparents
20:00	ESPNNews/Headline News	Heart of Fire	Sportscenter	The Simpsons/The Cosby Show
21:00	8 Simple Rules/The Bernie Mac Show	Fearless 21:45	MLB- Houston Astros @ St. Louis Cardinals	American Idol 3: Uncut, Uncensored and Untalented
22:00	America's Next Top Model			Star Trek: Next Generation

Today in History April 14

► *From historychannel.com*

1818 Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* is printed
1865 President Lincoln is assassinated
1912 RMS *Titanic* hits iceberg
1918 U.S. fliers in first dog-fight over western front
1965 173rd Airborne Brigade ordered to South Vietnam
1986 U.S. bombs Libya